

The Bhagavad Gita (translation by Jack Hawley)
(This is the avatar, Krishna, speaking in all these verses)

“There has never been a time when I, or you, or any of these kings and soldiers here did not exist – and there will never be a time when we cease to exist. Physical bodies appear and disappear, but not the *Atma* (the soul, the life force) that lives within them.

“This life force comes and dwells in a body for a while. While therein, it experiences infancy, childhood, youth, and old age, and then, upon death, passes eventually to a new body. Changes such as death pertain to the body, not the *Atma*. The wise person does not get caught up in the delusion that he or she is this body... This delusion is the very definition of *ego*.” (ch. 2, vs. 12-13)

“And know also... that as the Divinity in all creatures and all of nature, I am birthless and deathless. And yet, from time to time I manifest Myself in worldly form and live what seems an earthly life. I may appear human but that is only My *maya* (power of illusion), because in truth I am beyond humankind; I just consort with nature, which is Mine.

“Whenever goodness and *dharma* (right action) weaken and evil grows stronger, I make Myself a body. I do this to uplift and transform society, reestablish the balance of goodness over wickedness, explain the sublime plan and purpose of life, and serve as the model for others to follow. I come age after age in times of spiritual and moral crisis for this purpose. (ch. 4, vs. 6-8)

“Whatever path a person travels to Me is My path. In whatever way a person approaches Me, I return life for like. If they treat Me as father or mother, I treat them as My children. If they serve Me as master, I accept their services as their Lord. If they worship Me as a child, I approach them as a child. Those who pine for Me, I pine for. To those who see Me as friend I am friend. Even for those who perceive Me as enemy I approach as an enemy. All paths lead to Me, Divinity.” (ch. 4, vs. 11)

“In the beginning, I established the evolutionary system in nature whereby beings evolve toward spiritual perfection. I then established four groupings of people for the harmonious working of societies and the progress of human kind. These classifications correspond to progressively higher levels of consciousness and moral and spiritual attainment. All societies have generally similar groupings. The system sometimes unfortunately veers from its proper course, but know that the basic pattern is valid for the social harmony and clarity of purpose in all societies.

“And know... that although people are, at their core, all one, there are differences within them based on their karma (the consequences of their previous actions), and based on their natural make up.” (Ch. 4, vs. 13)

“[T] wise persons are in the world but not of it. They may be very busy with earthly matters but their heads and hearts stay in solitude. They are connected in this way to the *Atma* within.” (ch. 4, vs. 18)

“The truly wise act without scheming for the fruits of their actions, and are therefore without inner turmoil. This breaks the chain of *karma*. All their selfish desires have been consumed in the fire of knowing that they are not the body or the doer, but are indeed the *Atma*, the True Self Within.” (Ch. 4, vs. 19)

“All your karma melts away when you are unattached, when your mind is purified in the knowledge that all life is one, and when you perform your duties in the spirit of sacrifice as an act of devotion, an offering.” (Ch. 4, vs. 23)

“God is not distant, but is within yourself and is your Self. See Divinity in all your actions and you can actually achieve Union with the Godhead, Brahman. To do so requires being fully absorbed in Brahman, being constantly aware of Divinity every moment. No matter what you may be doing, whether eating, sleeping, working, praying or breathing, this attitude of worship aids the development of true knowledge and wisdom.” (Ch. 4, vs. 24)

“The goal of all your work, all actions, is not to multiply your possessions beyond proportions (which only makes you earthbound), but to bring you to spiritual wisdom (*jnana*), intuitive knowledge of the True Self Within. You are alive solely to become enlightened and united with God.” (ch. 4, vs. 33)

“God is neither responsible for nor takes note of anyone’s bad or even good deeds. Both bad and good karma are the result of actions performed by people who mistakenly think that their True Self (*Atma*) is connected to the worldly – which it is not. This is an elusive but important point. The Divine is absolute perfection, poise, and bliss. Worldly acts have no place in this blessed purity. Thinking otherwise is what I mean by ignorance and delusion. I repeat: God, the True Self in each living being, is in no way a part of the goings on in worldly nature.” (ch. 5, vs. 15)

“The wise recognize the transient nature of worldly gratification and thus do not look for happiness in the realm of the senses. Sensual delights are the wombs of misery. Earthly pleasures, though they seem enjoyable, are fleeting and ultimately painful. Wise ones know that the misery inevitably, without fail, marches in lockstep with worldly pleasure.

“Desire and anger are counterparts. Anger is your response to the frustrations of unfulfilled desires. When you can control or transcend desire and anger (which arise in your body, not your *Atma*) you will have found true, lasting happiness.” (ch. 5, vs. 22-23)

“When the mind becomes still and quiet, the Self reveals itself. At these depths one experiences the joy and peace of complete fulfillment. (ch. 6, vs. 20)

“Those who see Me in everything and everything in Me, know the staggering truth that the Self in the individual is the Self in all. As they live in constant spiritual awareness, I am never out of their sight or lost to them – nor are they ever out of My sight or lost to Me.” (ch. 6, vs. 30)

“I am the innate nature of everything. In pure water I am the sweet taste. In the sun and moon I am the radiance. In the very center of human beings I live as virility and courage. I am the sacred word Om, which designates the Divine, and I am the sound of it heard throughout the universe.

“I am the slight, delicate scent, the sweet fragrance of the earth. I am the brilliance in both fire and sun. I am the light of Divinity in all beings. I am the subtle spirit in spiritual practices that gives them their existence – I am the love in the devotee, for example, or the austerity in the ascetic, or the sweet sense of charity in the giver.” (ch. 7, vs. 8-9)

“Despite the fact that humanity finds numerous ways to separate God from the world, and despite the fact that everything in the world is perishable (including your body, I remind you), know that all of it is totally pervaded by the Imperishable Supreme Divine, which is Me.” (ch. 8, vs. 4)